

AgNews



DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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Governor Markell Celebrates “Pollinator Week” at Woodburn

Dover – Today, Governor Markell and Delaware Department of Agriculture (DDA) Secretary Ed Kee, and representatives from Delaware’s agriculture industry joined together to celebrate Delaware Pollinator Week at Woodburn, the official residence of the Governor of Delaware.

“I’ve established June 22-29, 2009 as “Pollinator Week” in Delaware, in recognition of the importance of our pollinating insects to many of Delaware’s production agriculture crops,” said Markell. “Today is the first step in the Woodburn Garden Pollinator -Friendly Initiative Carla and I have begun. We want the Woodburn Garden to set an example that others can follow and expand upon.”



Left to right:

Ed Kee, Secretary of Agriculture, Brent Ashley, Kent County Representative to State FFA, Michael Scott State FFA Sentinel, Lindsay Bethard, State FFA Vice President, Samantha Steele, State FFA Secretary, Jack Markell, Governor of Delaware, Randy Spence, Plant Manager, Vlasic Pickles, Lori Hughes, State FFA Vice President, Amber Bullock, State FFA Reporter, Samantha Burton, State FFA President, Stacey Hofmann, State FFA Executive Secretary, Taylor Green, Kent County Representative to State FFA.

During the event, representatives from DDA presented pollinator significant items to Governor Markell for the Woodburn garden and pantry:

- Randy Spence, Plant Manager, Vlastic Pickles (Pinnacle Food Group, Inc.), Millsboro, DE, presented pickles for the Woodburn pantry. Bees are vital to the pollination of cucumbers.
- Dr. Frank Morro, President of the Delaware Beekeepers presented honey and other items for the Woodburn pantry.
- Valann Budischak, Delaware Nursery and Landscape Association, recognized for DNLA's donation of pollinator friendly plants that have been planted in the Woodburn garden: Butterfly weed, Bee Balm, Asters, Liatris and Sunflowers.
- The Delaware Department of Agriculture presented a bee condo, which will provide valuable habitat/nesting for bees in the Woodburn garden. The bee condo was designed by DDA staff and built by DDA Forest Service staff for cavity-nesting bees such as orchard bees. They are constructed of wood from Delaware forests and materials.



Ed Kee, Secretary of Agriculture and Bob Ragin, DDA Forest Service with the bee condo, built by Ragin. The plant next to Ragin is Liatris, one of the many plants donated by the Delaware Nursery and Landscape Association to make the Woodburn garden more pollinator friendly.

Faith Kuehn, DDA Plant Industries Administrator, gave a brief overview of the Department of Agriculture's duties to protect pollinators, especially bees. In her remarks, she said, "It's not just honey bees that are suffering from population declines. Populations of native bees are also disappearing."

Kuehn continued, "The vast stretches of farmland, meadows and forests that once provided the food and nesting resources for bees are being replaced by cities, roads and suburban areas that are not as well suited to bees' survival. Diseases and bee pests have been accidentally introduced, and also reduced population levels."

In closing remarks, Secretary Kee said, "I am very proud of our Delaware farmers, horticultural industry, and beekeepers for all that they do to protect all of our pollinator species. We at the Department of Agriculture are available to offer information and assistance to anyone who wants to implement pollinator-friendly practices at their site."

Higher resolution electronic copies of pictures and the Governor's proclamation are available: anne.fitzgerald@state.de.us. For more information on pollinator-friendly gardens, go to the Delaware Department of Agriculture's website (www.dda.delaware.gov) and look under **Hot Topics**.

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